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ABSTRACT

To examine the effects of traditional reading programs on children's attitudes toward reading and what influence children's literature might have on such attitudes, a study proposed a possible rationale for incorporating children's literature into the curriculum to provide a more balanced reading program for students. The study compiled 60 annotations of books and articles in three areas: (1) the necessity of literature in the classroom; (2) the justification for literature in the classroom; and (3) the expectations of literature in the classroom. The study concluded that the need for children's literature in the elementary curriculum has been well documented in research; reading instruction presented in the confines of a traditional format, primarily basal readers, is narrow in approach and does not lead to healthy attitudes toward reading; it is the teacher's domain to influence favorable attitudes toward a subject; and reader involvement or response must be encouraged to realize the full potential of a literature program. (A glossary is included, and 59 references are attached.) (MS)

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INCORPORATING CHILDREN'S LITERATURE INTO THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL READING AND LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM: AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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by

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by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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INTRODUCTION

The educational system in America has been under attack for almost a decade. Such noted groups as the National Commission on Excellence in Education and the Carnegie Forum on Education have focused public attention on the inadequacies of our schools in general. The Commission on Reading in their report, Becoming a Nation of Readers, specifically addresses the inadequacies present in the teaching of reading in our elementary schools.

At a time when literacy is more important than ever, national attention is being focused on reading to insure that every child can and will learn the skill and joy of reading. Toward this end, the United States Library of Congress has declared 1989 the "Year of the Young Reader".

Because the reading habits a child develops in elementary school significantly influence his reading habits as an adult, the teacher must give direct attention to the formation of these habits. The interests and attitudes a child forms in relation to reading and literature will be a significant influence on the formation of his reading habits. The teacher's responsibility is to begin with a child's present interests and expand them.

The development of positive reading habits that will serve the individual throughout his lifetime is undoubtedly one of the most important long-range objectives for the

elementary school reading program. How, then, do we best cultivate such habits? Incorporating children's literature into the reading/language arts curriculum could prove to be our most effective tool.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This is an examination of the effects of traditional reading programs on children's attitudes toward reading and what influence children's literature might have on such attitudes.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

If children are expected to form the kind of reading interests and attitudes which result in strong personal reading habits, they must be exposed to literature and literature-related experiences. This is in addition to receiving direct instruction in the skills and mechanics of reading. While cognitive growth has long been the goal of reading instruction, affective growth must receive equal emphasis. This study proposes a possible rationale for incorporating children's literature into the curriculum in an effort to provide a more balanced reading program for our students.

ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

In developing a rationale for incorporating children's literature into the curriculum, the following areas will be scrutinized:

1. The necessity of literature in the classroom.
2. The justification of literature in the classroom.
3. The expectations of literature in the classroom.

Defining philosophies and establishing goals and objectives will address the issue of necessity. Justification will require an in-depth look at the positive and negative aspects of traditional reading instruction and its effect on the reader. Necessarily, we must also look at the value of children's literature and its impact on the reader. Expectations will focus on the role of the teacher and student response.

Of necessity, some of the above areas overlap but still address the designated topic.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There is a wealth of material available regarding the nature and value of children's literature in the reading program. The abstracts in this study represent just a small portion of the research and opinion available. There are many areas related to the topic of children's literature which are not touched upon at all in this study. Time and

space demand such limitations.

The recognized authorities in the field of children's literature have developed their theories primarily by observation over a period of years. While their findings and recommendations might technically be termed "opinion", their theories are invaluable and must be included in any study of children's literature.

While further study might enhance the findings presented, it would not alter the premise that incorporating children's literature in the curriculum is valid.

GLOSSARY

basal reader -- A textbook designed to be comprehensive, developmental, continuous-progress programs that provide for the sequential and systematic learning of all reading skills.

biblio-power -- The invisible influence of a book.

children's literature -- Consists of books read and enjoyed that meet high literary and artistic standards written especially for children.

DR-TA -- An acronym for"directed reading-thinking activity". Students assume greater responsibility for determining the purposes for reading and the teacher assumes a more facilitative role.

heterogeneous grouping -- Random assignment of students without regard to intelligence or special abilities.

holistic -- A teaching - learning approach that emphasizes wholes of subject matter.

homogeneous grouping -- The assignment of students based on intelligence or special abilities.

linguistic approach -- Reading programs that emphasize the regularity of letter-sound associations through consistent spelling patterns.

literary experiences -- An all-encompassing term which includes not only books but storytelling, films, recordings, slides and other media that can enrich life.

McGuffey readers -- A complete set of readers published between 1836 and 1844, the first readers to include one book for each grade.

psycholinguistics -- A study of the language along with the psychological aspects of that language.

readability forumlas -- A method of determining the difficulty or the grade level of reading materials. These formulas are often based on sentence length and the percentage of "hard words" in a passage.

schemata -- The background information each individual brings to the reading act, providing the framework for understanding.

SSR -- An acronym for "sustained silent reading" which is a time set aside in the classroom when everyone simply reads.

structured language books -- Books that employ repetitive language structures, rhyme, sequence, or predictable plots to stimulate children's interest and help them predict the next words or lines.

ANNOTATIONS

THE NECESSITY OF LITERATURE IN THE CLASSROOM DEFINING PHILOSOPHIES AND ESTABLISHING OBJECTIVES

Huck, Charlotte S. "Planning the Literature Program for the Elementary School." Language Arts 60 (Jan. 1983): 75-98.

The most important reason for teaching students to read is to help them become readers. Controversy still wages over methods and materials used in teaching reading. The majority of evidence points to the fact that in school we teach children the skill of reading, but our students do not develop the habit of reading or the desire to read. Good literature seems to offer the greatest support to teachers on their road to making students real readers.

Sutherland, Zena, Diane L. Monson, and May Hill Arbuthnot. Children and Books. Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1981.

Love of literature can be an enriching part of everyone's life. Learning to love reading and enjoy good literature can be the start of a life-long habit that brings pleasure as well as knowledge. "Unfortunately, many children learn to read without learning to love reading. Children are not born loving good books; neither are they born hating to read. They can be encouraged and influenced in either direction" (7). That is where the teacher can make a difference.

Children's literature has no absolute definition; however, most authorities in the field believe that children's literature consists of books read and enjoyed that meet high literary and artistic standards written especially for children.

During this century our society has changed drastically. These changes have influenced children's literature and are reflected in them. Children's literature meets the diverse backgrounds and interests of today's children. It also reflects the conflict and controversy in our society.

Reasoner, Charles F. Where the Readers Are. New York, NY: Dell Publishing Co., 1972.

"Literature exists for one purpose alone: enjoyment!" (13). The outcome of reading is comprehension. The job of the reading teacher is to teach each child those skills needed to derive meaning and satisfaction from the books he selects to read. The job of the literature teacher is one of discerning the child's interpretation of his experience.

Reading is taking in signs and signals and transforming them into meaning. Meanings are not printed; they are in people's minds. The reader must bring to the printed page his experiences which are pertinent to the content and reason for reading.

Since literature is also enveloped in the human element, its use in the classroom cannot be arranged in orderly, preordained packages. Teachers must be willing to change attitudes and take risks in order to use children's literature most effectively.

Arbuthnot, May Hill. Children and Books. Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1964.

Over the years children and adults have used books as a source of information, comfort, and pleasure. The annual output of books for children by publishers is now tremendous. To find the best books, we need standards for judging them. The two most important criteria toward this end are knowing that "a book is a good book for children only when they enjoy it; a book is a poor book for children, even when adults rate it as a classic, if children are unable to read it or are bored by its content" (2).

Basic needs are common. A child's needs initially are intensely and narrowly personal. As he matures, those needs broaden and become more widely socialized. To satisfy these needs, a child is always seeking to maintain the balance between personal happiness and social approval. Toward this end, books can help directly or indirectly to fill the need to achieve, the need for physical well-being, the need to know, the need to love and be loved, the need to belong, the need for change, and the need for beauty and order.

"For every child there should be a right book at the right time" (13).

Goodman, Kenneth. "Basal Readers: A Call for Action." Language Arts 63 (Apr. 1986): 358-363.

Throughout the history of education, text books have lagged behind the best knowledge in the fields they represent. "The gap between the best knowledge in reading instruction and that represented in basal readers today is actually widening" (358).

Publishers and basal authors should move immediately for improvement. The wealth of contemporary children's literature must be utilized, in unabridged form. At best, a basal program is only one resource in developing literacy. A full range of literary development must be presented, and a good portion of this should involved quality children's literature.

Adler, Mortimer J. How to Read a Book. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1940.

This noted scholar looked upon the art of reading as including all the same skills involved in the art of discovery: observation, memory, imagination, and reason. He theorized that if reading is learning, it must also follow that reading is thinking.

Adler saw the role of the teacher in our educational system as one of helping students acquire certain skills -- they show us "how". They tell us what to do and show us how to do it. Their role, then, is one who communicates information. According to Adler, information is shallow, and understanding is the ultimate goal of education. This understanding can only come from discovery, and a primary source of discovery is books.

Adler made a strong indictment of American schools who "educated" their students but graduated them illiterate -- not illiterate in the sense of not knowing the skills of reading but illiterate in the joys of reading. Adler considered the inferior quality of reading done in the schools the basis for this illiteracy.

French, Michael P., and Shirley J. Elford, eds. Literature and Reading. Educational Resources Information Center, ED 273 933, 1986.

"Works of children's literature can have an integral place in the reading program that transcends the offering of the basal." Using literature can establish the connection of what reading books is all about. Throughout education the tendency has been to separate literature from reading, primarily due to concern that children should understand everything they read. Current comprehension instruction focuses on an interplay of the reader's background knowledge, the text to be read, purpose for reading, and the strategy used by the reader.

Anderson, Richard C.,et al. Becoming a Nation of Readers: The Report of the Commission on Reading. Urbana, IL: The Center for the Study of Reading, 1985.

This report, after a two year study, summarized research findings and drew inferences from them.

Basic reading skills improved slightly in the past ten years; however, recent comparisons with the United States, Taiwan, and Japan found a disproportionate number of United States students among the poorest readers. The Commission pointed out that test scores were only one indicator of the problem. It pointed out that gains in reading achievement are consistently related to how much reading students do outside of school. Even in school, it was found that students spent an average of seven or eight minutes a day in independent silent reading. The Commission was also critical of workbooks and practice sheets, ability grouping, skills managment, and single-minded emphasis on basal readers.

The Commission proposed a seventeen-point plan to help improve reading instruction in our schools. Parents were urged to read to their children. Teachers were advised to spend more instructional time on comprehension and less on skills. Students were advised to do more independent reading and writing and less workbook assignments. The Commission further recommended that basal readers not only be upgraded but supplemented with children's literature.

Schools were advised to cultivate an atmosphere that supports reading by exposing children regularly to good children's literature, by incorporating these books in the classroom reading program, and by maintaining well-stocked and well-staffed libraries. For children to become readers, they must learn to love reading.

The Commission defined literacy as follows: "For each age, there are fables, fairy tales, folk tales, classic and modern works of fiction and non-fiction that embody the core of our cultural heritage. A person of that age cannot be considered literate until he or she has read, understood and appreciated these works" (61).

McEvoy, George F., and Cynthia S. Vincent. "Who Reads and Why." Journal of Communication 30 (Winter 1980): 134-140.

This article reported on a study designed to provide a comprehensive look at reading among adults in the United States. The objectives were to differentiate readers from non-readers, to identify the types of material being read, and to find out why people read what they did.

Three factors appeared to have a pronounced influence on the amount and nature of book reading. Good basic reading skills were a prerequisite. Finding reading pleasurable as well as a source for knowledge or information was considered very important. Being able to integrate reading with other life activities was also essential. The profile of a real reader showed an active individual who found reading a highly pleasurable pastime.

Ribovich, Jerilyn K., and Lawrence Erickson. "A Study of Lifelong Reading with Implications for Instructional Programs." Journal of Reading 24 (Oct. 1980): 20-26.

This study conducted interviews with adults over the age of sixty to find out about their reading attitudes, habits, and interests.

The means for attitude and quantity of reading generally remained consistent across childhood years, middle years, and later years.

The study showed that schooling clearly had an effect on reading attitudes and habits. That influence could even be greater if knowledge of lifelong reading is considered when reading programs are developed.

If it is true that reading is primarily for enjoyment and information, these objectives should be stressed in a reading program. Because reading attitudes seemed to remain constant, the value and love of reading needs to be developed in childhood.

THE JUSTIFICATION OF A LITERATURE PROGRAM
EFFECTS OF TRADITIONAL READING INSTRUCTION ON THE STUDENT

Goodman, Kenneth S., et. al. Choosing Materials to Teach Reading. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1966.

"What children read inevitably imparts certain values, attitudes, and concepts about people and their world" (116). Limited content, artificial sentence structure, and plotless or oversimplified plots do not lead to healthy attitudes toward reading.

Enjoyable literature must be interesting. Interests of children vary greatly according to age, sex, maturity level, previous life experience, previous experiences with books, the educational level of the family, personal and cultural values. Just as the interests of children are varied, so are their needs. "Each child finds different meaning and significance in content that appears to meet the general needs of children at each age level" (117).

It is doubtful that basic readers can meet the needs of children or capture their imaginations. What is necessary is a well-rounded program designed to provide a wide variety of literary forms, thus making reading pleasurable.

Meisel, Stephen, and Gerald G. Glass. "Voluntary Reading Interests and the Interest Content of Basal Readers." The Reading Teacher 23 (April 1970): 655-659.

In the teaching of reading, the interest of the students is significant in the progress made by individual students. Once interest is aroused, the process of learning to read is enhanced.

In many schools, the basal reader is the primary tool used to teach basic reading skills. Do these basals reflect the interest of students?

This study was conducted in two parts: recording the titles of the library books withdrawn and categorizing them by genre, and analyzing these same interest areas in basals. The study concluded that of the ten most popular interest areas of children only four (personal adventure, humor, fantasy, and historical adventure) were consistently found in the basal readers. The results tend to support the hypothesis that the type of story found in the basal reader is generally not the type of story that children voluntarily chose to read themselves.

Cook, Valerie J., and Mary Alice White. "Reinforcement Potency of Children's Reading Materials." Journal of Educational Psychology 69 (June 1977): 231-236.

Most educators and psychologists believe there is a direct correlation between the interest in the material being read and the comprehension of that material. For this reason, basal readers have been under considerable scrutiny. The two most common methods of measuring children's interests have been questionairres and tabulating library withdrawals. Cook and White designed two experiements to measure children's reading interests behaviorally. The studies measured childrens preferences between McGuffey readers, current basals, and traditional children's literature. Each of these areas were recorded. The number of seconds spent listening to each of the three alternatives was tabulated. The children overwhelmingly spent more time listening to children's literature. The children were then divided at random into groups placed in either McGuffey readers, basals, or children's literature. While all groups showed some growth on a standardized reading test, the group reading children's literature gained significantly more than the other two groups.

Davis, Shirley. Types of Literature Found in Children's Basal Readers. Educational Resources Information Center, ED 281 191, 1987.

This study was done with twelve second grade students using three different basals (MacMillan, Harcourt-Brace, and Scott Foresman) at four different levels to identify the types of stories found as well as the acts of reading portrayed in the stories.

Data showed that contemporary stories appeared most frequently, followed by folk tales. Fairy tales appeared the least. Total acts of reading constituted less than ten percent of the stories.

A mismatch was found between the types of stories found in basals and the types of stories students preferred.

Brozo, Wm. G., and Carl M. Tomlinson. "Literature: The Key to Lively Content Courses." The Reading Teacher 40 (Dec. 1986): 288-293.

Many students get their first look at the culture, history, and politics of other countries through content area textbooks. Unfortunately, the stories showing human interaction are missing from textbooks. Consequently, texts and the lessons based on them are often lifeless and dull. The skillful use of children's literature in conjunction with texts can make the content curriculum more interesting and thereby increase learning.

Textbooks are excellent for dispensing facts but are rarely able to show the evolvement of important concepts. Teachers must, then, identify the concepts to be developed. Corresponding literature can help, but first it is necessary to identify appropriate tradebooks. By integrating trade books with texts, a more complete and a more interesting picture can be painted.

Bridge, Connie, Peter Winograd, and Darlene Haley. "Using Predictable Materials vs. Preprimers to Teach Beginning Sight Words." The Reading Teacher 36 (May 1983): 884-891.

Patterned or structured language has been shown to be an effective way of teaching sight vocabulary to beginning readers. After hearing such materials read aloud, children can join in and "read". Initially they are probably not able to recognize individual words, but repeated opportunities to recognize high frequency words help them develop a sight vocabulary they can transfer to other works. In a basal series, pre-primers and primers use the same words repeatedly in short sentences to meet readability criteria. This strict control of sentence length and repetition of vocabulary results in contrived, unnatural sentences which do not correspond to the more complex oral language of the children. Further, stories in primers and pre-primers are often without a plot and are less a story than a string of disconnected sentences. This can actually interfere with beginning reading comprehension. Authorities are in general agreement that the most important thing about beginning reading materials may well be their predictability. The material provided for beginning readers in many basals is not predictable in either language or plot. This study compared the effectiveness of beginning reading instruction for slow learners using predictable materials, specifically sight word recognition and attitude toward reading tasks. The control group used a conventional basal. The students using predictable children's literature learned significantly more sight words than the control group. These students also learned approximately the same percentage more of non-target words. The study also showed that children who use predictable materials rely more on context clues in their reading.

EFFECTS OF LITERATURE ON THE STUDENT

Simons, Sandra McCandess. "Beyond the Spell of Written Words." Focus on Reading (Oct. 1988): 22-24.

Simons surveyed teachers who use a literature-based reading program to find out why they used this approach. The most frequent reason given was that reading literature was fun. It motivated students not only to learn to read but to enjoy reading. Teachers also thought that literature stimulated thinking and developed the imagination. They considered literature a good way for children to learn about themselves and others. The teachers also stated that reading literature provided strong language models which enriched children's speaking and writing.

Huck, Charlotte S. "Literature as the Content of Reading." Theory into Practice 16 (Dec. 1977): 363-371.

Children want to learn to read because they want to read real stories with believable characters. Many basal readers are filled with "non-stories" -- stories written with a contrived, restricted vocabulary about a carefully selected sampling of people.

Children work long and hard to achieve skills they know will bring them pleasure, such as riding a bike or learning to swim. Children will work equally hard to master the ability to read stories which will give them enjoyment. We know children learn best when the text has personal meaning for them. Through reading books themselves and hearing them read aloud, children become familiar with "book language" and slowly develop a sense of story.

The greatest value of using literature in the reading program is that children experience the fun of reading and have a chance to enjoy an entire book instead of bits and pieces of a story.

Literature also has the power to influence children's lives. "Much of what a child learns in school is concerned with knowing; literature is concerned with feeling" (365). It can educate the heart as well as the head.

Teachers who use literature in the reading program must provide a variety of ways in which it can be utilized. A daily read-aloud program is essential. Providing a wide range of books and daily time to do silent reading is also necessary. In addition, children need time to respond to books in a variety of ways.

Teaching reading through literature is not easy, but for teachers who are enthusiastic about books and want their students to become real readers, it is the only way to teach reading.

Morrow, Lesley Mandel. "Developing Young Voluntary Readers: The Home -- The Child -- The School." Reading Research and Instruction 25 (Fall 1985): 1-8.

An alarming number of children do not choose to read either for pleasure or information. Researchers are beginning to question the effects of developmental reading programs (basal readers) which are often heavily skills oriented. These programs preclude reading for pleasure and could be helping to turn children away from books.

Many factors appear to contribute to a child's interest in books. Two of the most prominent are exposure to literature in the home at an early age and monitored and restricted television viewing time.

Much has been written about using literature in the classroom. Noted authors such as Huck and Arbuthnot have for years emphasized the importance of programs that encourage pleasurable experiences with books. A comprehensive reading program must have regularly scheduled literature activities to promote voluntary reading. A classroom recreational reading program (such as SSR) does result in the increased use of literature.

Through regularly scheduled literature activities, children will develop an appreciation for books. These children will become adults who choose to read voluntarily.

Alexander, J. Estill,and Ronald Claude Filler. Attitudes and Reading. Neward, DE: International Reading Assn., 1976.

Attitudes of a group of ten year-olds toward reading were changed by utilizing certain instructional practices. In this study there were three control classroom and three experimental classrooms. The control group maintained the conventional basal reading program. The experimental group, while using the basal reader in a limited way, used children's literature as the core of their reading program. At the end of the study, attitudes were measured using the San Diego County Inventory of Reading Attitude. Significant differences in attitudes were found between the two groups, causing Estill and Filler to conclude that positive attitudes toward reading could be fostered by incorporating children's literature in the reading program.

Rasinski, Timothy. Learning within a Classroom Context: First Graders' Conceptions of Literacy. Educational Resources Information Center, ED 291 084, 1987.

This study concerns children's ideas about literacy. The way a child perceives reading and writing could affect later behavior when school-related tasks are no longer required.

The state of adult literacy behavior is not encouraging. Ley reports that ten percent of the adult American population reads eighty percent of the books, and one-half the population has never read a book in its entirety. Do these non-reading adults look upon reading and writing as having no practical or personal value? Do negative attitudes toward literacy stem from negative conceptions of reading and writing as a child? Does the manner of reading instruction affect attitudes?

Jerry L. Johns found significant correlations greater than .3 between reading achievement levels and the level of sophistication in the students' definitions of reading. Johns' study asked students to define reading in an interview-like format. Charles Bondy did a similar study based on a four-month observational investigation of a first grade classroom using the basal reading approach. He found that low readers defined reading at a surface level, and high readers displayed deeper concepts of reading.

This study, conducted in three first grade classrooms, used three different types of reading instruction: a content-centered mastery learning program, a traditional basal reading approach, and a literature-based approach.

The literature-based program followed a theme format. The teacher provided many books at different levels following the theme. These children could also read any materials brought in from other sources. The teacher modeled reading by reading to the class daily.

Data was collected after an eight month period. All first grade children in the three classrooms were individually interviewed and simply asked the question, "What is reading?" and "What is writing?". If these questions did not generate a response, additional questions were used. Answers were scored on a specific scale by doctoral candidates in reading.

The results reflected the nature of the classroom and the ability level of the children. The literature-based classroom had the highest or most meaning-based concepts of reading and writing. The basal reader room had the middle level score, and the mastery learning room had the lowest scores. From these results Rasinski concluded that the type of instruction does affect the way first graders perceive literacy. Teachers need to be aware that the type and context of their instruction have definite affect on students.

Eldredge, J. Lloyd, and Dennie Butterfield. "Alternatives to Traditional Reading Instruction." The Reading Teacher 40 (Oct. 1986): 32-37.

The United States Commission on Reading's report was an indictment of some of the methods used to teach reading in our schools. The Commission proposed alternative methods.

For this study, five experimental approaches to reading instruction were developed by the investigators. The teachers who were to implement the study underwent a four-month training period. The first group used a basal reader in a homogeneous grouping with a special decoding program. The second group used a basal reader with heterogeneous grouping -- often working in twos or threes. The third group used a basal reader with heterogeneous grouping and a special decoding program. Group four were in a strictly literature program. Their reading period was spent reading tradebooks, sharing books, and doing activities to stimulate their interest in reading. The fifth group used a literature program with a special decoding program.

Three of the groups made significant gains over the traditional groups -- both groups using literature and the traditional basal group using the special decoding strategies. Statistical analysis of the effects of materials, grouping, and decoding on achievement and attitudes toward reading indicated that using children's literature to teach children to read had a positive effect upon students' achievements and attitudes. The special decoding instruction also was a positive factor, as was heterogeneous grouping.

Of the 104 books used in the literature-based programs, 91% had readability scores above 3.0, and 62% had scores above the 4.0 level. The second graders involved in this study read and enjoyed these books despite the lack of vocabulary control.

Attitudes toward reading decreased among children using basal readers during the same period of time, which indicates that materials do have an impact on the achievement and attitudes of the reader.

Hittleman, Daniel R. Developmental Reading: A Psycholinguistic Perspective. Chicago, IL: Rand McNally College Publishing Co., 1978.

A literature program is one of the important ways in which children can learn to relive the experiences of others and broaden their own personal experiences. Because of the pluralistic nature of American society, literature can offer insights into and appreciation of diverse cultural and ethnic groups.

Literature must be presented not only as a source of enjoyment but also as a means of understanding the world.

A planned, balanced literature program should provide for free choice of reading materials, guidance in finding a desired book, creative sharing of books, and reading aloud daily by the teacher. The literature presented should be a combination of classic literature, the books that have endured for long periods of time, and newer literature, consisting of the "realistic" works which more closely mirror the immediate world of the child.

Smith, Nancy J., et al. "Making the Literate Environment Equitable." The Reading Teacher 40 (Mar. 1987): 400-407.

What influence does children's literature have on the socialization of children? The term "socialization" identifies the process by which a person slowly develops a set of values and attitudes, likes and dislikes, goals and purposes, patterns of response and concept of self. This image of self is arrived at gradually through a complicated process which continues throughout life.

The importance of books as socializing agents has been attested to by numberous researchers such as Eric Kummel and Sara Zimet. It is assumed that in reading a story a child goes through symbolically the episode that is being desscribed. The same principles, then, are expected to govern the effect of the reading on the child as would govern the effect of actually having that experience in real life.

This study done on the read-aloud preferences of teachers in Kansas and Texas indicated their choices included twice as many male protagonists as female protagonists. The images of female characters were narrowly defined and frequently negative. The images of boys were positive but male stereotyped.

Teachers are probably unaware of the degree of sex bias in their read-aloud preferences. They need to consciously select books that present a more balanced view of sex roles.

Hopkins, Carol J. "Representation of the Handicapped in Basal Readers." The Reading Teacher 36 (Oct. 1982): 30-32.

The portrayal of handicapped individuals in children's literature has been well-documented. It has often been suggested that literature be used to promote understanding and positive attitudes toward the physically and mentally disabled.

If literature could be used toward this end, a logical instructional material to foster this understanding would be the basal reader. A study done of twelve major basal reading series found that less than one percent of the stories dealt with any type of handicap. To promote positive attitudes toward the disabled, teachers must supplement with appropriate children's literature.

O'Brien, Maureen R. Children's Literature in the Basals. Educational Resources Information Center, ED 282 183, 1987.

O'Brien studied the types of literature in three basal series (Open Court, MacMillan, and Scott, Foresman and Co.). It was hypothesized that basal readers did not contain adequate samplings of "good literature", that is, literature classified into the following categories determined by experts in the field of children's literature: poetry and verse, picture stories, folk tales, fairy tales, myths, fables and legends, fantasy, history, realism, and informational literature. All three series were found to provide insufficient amounts and varieties of quality literature as defined above.

Green, Georgia M., and Margaret S. Olson. Preferences for and Comprehension of Original and Readability-Adapted Materials. Educational Resources Information Center, ED 281 181, 1986.

Fifty-eight second graders in a small Illinois school participated in a preference interview and a comprehension task. The authors used two original children's books and adaptations of these books created by basal reader publishers to see which version the children preferred and which was easier to understand. Adapted versions were abridged according to readability formulas to meet the criteria for the grade level.

Results indicated a strong preference for the original story over adaptations. No significant difference in students' comprehension scores were found between the original and the adaptations; consequently, there is no educationally valid motive for continuing to adapt otherwise suitable texts to meet the demands of readability formulas.

Many adaptations destroy the essence of the work. Also, to be confronted only with what one can understand is certainly unnatural and contrary to how life is.

Pappas, Christine C., and Olga Brown. "Learning to Read by Reading: Learning How to Extend the Functional Potential of Language." Research in the Teaching of English 21 (May 1987): 160-177.

Learning to read is an extension of the functional potential of language. To become literate, a child must learn to recognize certain important characteristics of written language -- its organization, its rhythms and structures, and the quality of written language.

This study described a linguistic analysis of the ways a five-year-old kindergarten child learned to extend the functional potential of language by pretend reading three times a picture storybook previously read to her. This child was a student in a public classroom taught by a teacher who used children's literature as the basis for her reading instruction.

In past years reading was narrowly defined as "decoding" or letter/word recognition. This approach overlooked completely a crucial factor in literacy development -- namely, how children go about learning the characteristics of the written linguistic message. Because the organization, rhythms, structures,and quality of children's literature are consistently better than stories found in basal readers, children exposed to a variety of children's literature are provided with a better access to written language and are, consequently, able to extend the functional potential of language.

Morrow, Lesley Mandel. "Story Structures Represented in Selections of Primary Basal Readers." Reading Improvement 19 (Fall 1982): 194-199.

Research has shown that an understanding of story structure facilitates comprehension. The purpose of this study was to identify the story structures used in six different basal readers for primary grades. A total of 577 stories were included and analyzed using a story structure taxonomy. Three main categories accounted for 87% of the stories: confrontation, episodic, plotless. When children were allowed to choose primary level literature, six categories were represented. In addition to confrontation, episodic, and plotless, children also frequently selected stories of quest, contrast, and story collections. The latter three are not well-represented in basals.

Exposure to a variety of story structures enables the child to develop a schemata for other stories using the same structure. This, in turn, helps develop better comprehension.

Moyce, Ruth M., and James F. Christie. "Using Literature to Develop Children's Grasp of Syntax." The Reading Teacher 34 (Dec. 1981): 298-304.

Syntax, or the rules for arranging words in sentences, is being taught through new approaches. It is recommended that children be given oral and written practice in creating sentences similar to models. The close relationship between syntax and reading comprehension suggests that this new approach might also have a positive effect on students' reading ability. Moyce and Christie's study was to determine the effectiveness of this new approach.

The integrated sentence modeling cycle uses four steps to introduce a syntactic pattern. First, the children listen to the teacher read children's books in which a particular syntactic structure is repeated many times. Next the children talk about the target structure and do oral activities repeating the pattern. Third, the students write sentences following the syntactic pattern. Finally, the children read other books that repeat the target structure.

Many literature books can be used for direct skill instruction. Children's literature can aid in improving syntactic competence as well as other areas of language arts.

Children taught with the new literature modeling cycle approach showed significant gain over the control group which were taught syntax in the conventional manner.

Chomsky, Carol. "Stages in Language Development and Reading Exposure." Harvard Educational Review 42 (Feb. 1972): 1-33.

In this study, thirty-six children between the ages of six and ten were tested to check their knowledge of nine complex syntactic structures. Five of the structures were acquired in sequence, revealing five developmental stages in acquisition of syntax. The author then examined the relationship between children's exposure to written language and the rate of linguistic development. The results show a strong correlation between the amount of reading exposure and language development. This would imply that wider reading should be considered for the curriculum. Children should not be restricted to materials labeled "at level" but have access to any books that interest them. In this way, the child could glean what was understandable to him and put it to use in his own way. This approach would be more in accord with the way oral language is acquired.

Gambrell, Linda B., and Carol Sokolski. "Picture Potency: Use Caldecott Award Books to Develop Children's Language." The Reading Teacher 36 (May 1983): 686-871.

In picture story books the illustrations and text work together to build the story.

In this study, the Manzo-Legenza formula for assessing picture effectiveness was used in two second grade classrooms and the scores combined to give a total. Twenty Caldecott award books were randomly selected for analysis.

Results suggest that Caldecott winners provide an excellent source of pictures for stimulating oral language. In contrast, when the Manzo-Legenza formula was applied to the pictures in first and second grade basal readers, the language stimulation potential was low.

The use of good picture storybooks stimulated children to get other books.

Gambrell, Linda B., and Elaine M. McLaughlin, eds. New Directions in Reading: Research and Practice. Educational Resources Information Center, ED 255 885, 1985.

On the premise that children learn language by using it, learning to read comes about by reading. As the child gradually grasps the rules of written language, he must be supplied reading material that supports his growing control. Children's literature provides a good story element and natural, uncontrived language. Reading is extended as children tackle a range of reading materials. Children's literature helps to build up a reservoir of literary language that makes prediction possible. Children's literature allows children to get to know books in an enjoyable and satisfying way.

Goodman, Yetta. "Retellings of Literature and the Comprehension Process." Theory into Practice 21 (Autumn 1982): 293-300.

Two aspects of reading which help us understand comprehension processing have been identified by Kenneth Goodman. These aspects are comprehending (the process of trying to make sense of the text) and comprehension (what the reader understands the text to mean). Retellings after reading extend the reader's comprehension and provide insights into understanding the processes taking place for the teacher.

Ms. Goodman used the same passage from "Freddie Miller, Scientist," by Lillian Moore, with children of varying reading abilities, cultures, and ethnic background. An unaided retelling followed each reading plus open-ended questions.

The degree of relevance of the literature to the reader was a big advantage in being able to compare and predict; consequently, relevancy of literature has a large impact on comprehension.

Harker, W. John. "Children's Literature and Back to the Basics." Reading Horizons 20 (Spring 1980): 159-164.

The comprehension of literature places different demands upon children than the comprehension of non-imaginative prose. The "back to basics" movement asserts that it doesn't matter what is being read. As long as children are taught individual skills in a structured sequence, then reading and comprehension will follow.

The purpose of this study was to provide a rationale for using children's literature in the reading program.

Comprehension results when the child finds a consistency between the model of reality he expects to find on the page and what he actually does find. However, the world of literature is essentially unreal so it will not fit into a model of reality. The world of literature is a world of imagination and fancy. When children's literature is considered in this way, comprehension involves understanding alternate models of reality created in the minds of writers. A child's initial reaction to alternate models of reality is surprise followed by confusion and frustration or discovery and delight. The skills approach fails to encourage the process whereby children learn to comprehend. Furthermore, because of its blandness and lack of interest, skills and basals stifle children's receptivity to the imaginative world found in literature.

Widomski, Cheryl L. "Building Foundations for Reading Comprehension." Reading World 22 (May 1983): 306-313.

"Reading is greater than the sum of teachable skills" (306). Advocates of the holistic view argue that reading is a meaning-based process in which children comprehend text through interactions between text and personal background and experience; consequently, reading a particular text would be unique to each reader.

Semantic webbing and directed reading-thinking activity (DR-TA) strategies can be developed through literature experiences. This aids the development of comprehension as a meaning-based process.

Lehman, Barbara A., and Patricia R. Crook. "Effective Schools Research and Excellence in Reading: A Rationale for Children's Literature in the Curriculum." Childhood Education 64 (April 1988): 235-242.

Both effective schools research and reading research support the view that more time in school should be devoted to reading children's literature. More than basal readers are necessary for effective reading instruction.

Children learn better if they understand what they are to learn and why. The ultimate goal for reading instruction is the ability to use reading as a tool for pleasure and learning. When children read personally meaningful materials, they respond in a positive way to the reading act. Most basal readers do not have the range of stories necessary to accomplish this purpose.

Emphasis in most basal programs is on the mechanics of reading; consequently, poor readers often consider decoding rather than getting the meaning the goal of reading. If we want children to read with understanding, reading instruction must include more than decoding and drill. Children's literature helps focus attention to comprehension not accurate word calling.

Effective schools use a wide range of materials in teaching reading -- including real literature. Through literature, children are exposed to the best written language in many forms.

Children's literature can help to maximize learning time in the reading program. Less time is wasted if children have something to read when assignments are completed. Also, successful reading requires the opportunity to read.

If we set our sights no higher than a basal program, we will not nurture lifelong readers. The teacher's job must also include getting children "hooked on books". This can be accomplished through exposure to a wide range of children's literature.

EXPECTATIONS OF A LITERATURE PROGRAM
THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER

Huck, Charlotte S. Children's Literature in the Elementary School. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976.

"Teachers must commit themselves not only to teaching children to read but to help children become readers -- children who can read, will read and will want to read" (590). Teachers who make this committment must begin by providing a wide variety of activities for language development because reading is the end product of much talk, recording words, writing meaningful stories, hearing stories, and looking at vast numbers of books. The study of literature must receive planned time in this kind of program.

Huck considers the reading program to be divided into three phases: the instructional program teaches reading skills, the functional program stresses obtaining useful information, the recreational program provides for reading for pleasure and enjoyment.

Huck advocates making literature an integral part of every curriculum. The best evaluation of the impact of a literature program for today's children will be their reading habits as adults.

Veatch, Jeannette. Reading in the Elementary School. New York, NY: John Wiley and Sons, 1978.

In this book Veatch promotes the theory that children should be allowed to read at their own interest and ability level without the need for preplanned materials. This is in sharp contrast to the traditional approach which teaches reading using graded materials with built-in progressions. This text is set up as a guideline for a program that allows a child to choose his own reading material and then be taught to read using those self-selected materials.

Logan, John W. "Developing Children's Appreciation of Literature." Language Arts 60 (April 1983): 518-521.

The importance of an individual's ability to appreciate literature is based on the idea that the benefits derived from literature go far beyond reading for pleasure alone. Literature can also teach and expand ones knowledge in a particular area.

Before students are able to learn to appreciate literature, they must have an interest in reading. Pupil interest can be developed in several ways: motivate and give a purpose for reading literature, show what benefits various materials offer, show interest in the books they have read and allow them to share their thoughts and feelings, make books readily available in the classroom.

Teachers must be role models, but they must also stimulate pupils' interest in literature by creating an environment and using activities that lead to good children's books. Book fairs, which can be as simple or elaborate as one wishes, are one such activity. Visits from librarians or trips to the library are activities drawing children to books. Guides and booklists are available to assist in selecting books for children. These offer information on types of literature, suggested age levels, special interests and other classifications to assist teachers.

"Stimulating, guiding, and maintaining students' appreciation of literature must pervade all their years of learning and all areas of study" (520). Teachers who model the pleasures of reading, saturate their classrooms with books, and take advantage of opportunities to use literature in various ways are promoting a life-long appreciation of reading in their students.

Welsh, Vida. Why Change? A Teacher's Perspective. Educational Resources Information Center, ED 255 868, 1985.

Dissatisfaction with the reading performance of students is often the catalyst to change approaches. Welsh reports on how an innovative reading program was selected and implemented at a New Jersey elementary school. Literature was used as the core instead of as a supplement to the basal program. Trade books replaced basal readers, and workbooks were replaced by individual and group projects related to the books being read. All of the teachers involved attended demonstrations and discussion sessions as well as workshops. A leadership team was established to provide assistance when necessary and to ensure that all necessary materials were available.

Welsh points out these things about making a change in reading approach: trust needs to be established, a need for change must be shown, and a better alternative plan must be presented.

Shannon, Patrick. "Hidden within the Pages: A Study of Social Perspective in Young Children's Favorite Books." The Reading Teacher 39 (March 1986): 656-663.

Books children read or those read to them contribute to their intellectual, emotional, and social development. These books provide examples that confirm and challenge the decisions of children's daily lives. Favorite books are especially important because they are read regularly, and many are remembered for a lifetime. The effect of these books is seldom immediate; rather, it is the result of repeated exposures over a period of time.

Part of the teacher's job is to help children see what books are saying both directly and indirectly.

This study examined the social perspectives presented by a sampling of the Children's Choices books. These books showed a clear tendency to emphasize the self as the focus for activity rather than cooperative endeavors or concern for living in harmony with others.

Through the years authors of children's books have endeavored to improve character through the messages in their books. Modern authors are subtle, but the aim is the same. The authors do place the individual at the center of his social world and deal with life at that level.

This study took a random sampling of approximately fifteen percent of Children's Choices listed in 1978, 1980, and 1982. These years were selected because these books were probably available in school and public libraries. The sampling was limited to books classified for young readers. Trained graduate students classified the social perspectives of children's books by reading/ check list/ discussion. The themes were rated either individualism, collectivism, or balanced.

Although nearly all young children's favorite books seem to provide an individualist social perspective, teachers and parents by this awareness can present a more balanced social perspective to young children by discussion, children's own writing, and books presenting a collective or balanced social perspective.

Eldredge, J. Lloyd, and Dennie Butterfield. Sacred Cows Make Good Hamburger. Educational Resources Information Center, ED 255 861, 1984.

This study was done to assess five basic tenets in the traditional classroom reading program. The following "sacred cows"were tested: the use of informal reading inventories for placing children in reading groups, homogeneous grouping, readability formulas for determining grade levels of reading materials, the use of basal readers as the only effective means of reading instruction, and the analytical phonics strategies used to teach children phonics skills. Five experimental programs were involved, comprising second grade classrooms in four separate school districts. Students in both the control groups and the experimental groups were administered pretests and posttests in reading, vocabulary, comprehension, phonics, self image and reading interest. The findings suggest that by involving students in a variety of non-instructional reading, and by using phonics, heterogenous grouping, and a core of children's literature, student achievement is significantly greater than it is for those student taught in traditional classrooms.

Olson, Nancy L. An Annotated Bibliography of the Literature Dealing with the Importance of Integrating a Children's Literature Program into the Elementary Language Arts/ Reading Curriculum. Educational Resources Information Center, ED 251 859, 1983.

This study is a good overview of the material dealing with incorporating children's literature in the reading curriculum. Goals and objectives of such a program are identified, a rationale for developing curricula is stated, and concrete recommendations are itemized. The review of related literature to the topic is thorough and covers books, journals, ERIC documents, and other pertinently related materials.

Cullinan, Bernice E., ed. Children's Literature in the Reading Program. Educational Resources Information Center, ED 281 151, 1987.

This is a synopsis of a book available through the International Reading Association. The book is intended as a guide for teachers in selecting and incorporating children's literature in their reading program. Its contributors are such distinguished authorities in the field of children's literature as Nancy Larrick, Bill Martin, Jr., Charlotte Huck, Diane Monson, and others. The topics covered are numerous and include poetry, higher order reading, multicultural understanding, plus fourteen other areas of interest to those who teach reading. The conversational style of the articles is easily understandable, and the concrete examples are quite adaptable to classroom use. An index of children's books and authors is also included.

Hawkins, Sue. "Reading Interests of Gifted Children." Reading Horizons 24 (Fall 1983): 18-22.

Studies of the reading interests of children report common findings. High on all lists were mysteries, adventures, comics, ghost stories and science fiction. Non-fiction materials were rated lowest.

Because gifted children reputedly have learning styles that differ from the norm, this study was done to see if their reading interests also differed.

Sixty-two students who were enrolled in a program called "Saturday Morning Experience" were the subjects. Criteria for selection to this group was a measured I.Q. above 130. The group consisted of fourth, fifth, and sixth graders. Subjects were given a paper/pencil inventory. Results indicated that reading interests of gifted intermediate grade students do not differ from children in general as reported by Pieronek and Ashley a decade ago. For children in this study, chronological age rather than intellectual ability seemed more important.

D'Angelo, Karen. "Biblio-Power: Promoting Reading and Writing with Books." Reading Psychology 3 (Oct.-Dec. 1982): 347-354.

Biblio-power (the invisible influence of a book) can be used effectively to develop positive attitudes about reading among reluctant readers. The purpose of this study was to identify Newbery and Caldecott Medal books which possess biblio power. Besides teaching reading skills, teachers must foster the development of positive attitudes and values about reading. When students learn that reading can be a source of enjoyment and satisfaction as well as a means for gaining information, they become committed to reading for a lifetime. Certain books have the power to promote positive attitudes about reading. This study selected books whose characters routinely engaged in reading. These characters served as appropriate role models for students reading the book. Of one-hundred six books reviewed, only eighteen fit the criteria.

Feeley, Joan T. "Content Interests and Media Preferences of Middle Graders: Differences in a Decade." Reading World 22 (Oct. 1982): 11-16.

The author replicated a study she had done at the end of the 70's on content interests and media preferences of middle grade children. This study was undertaken to see if the great social changes that have occurred in the past ten years had an impact on the reading habits and preferences of middle grade children.

The study was done with fourth and fifth graders in the Hackensack, New Jersey, schools -- just as the first study was done. The children responded to an inventory of fifty items -- the same items used in the first study. Consistent with the previous research, boys and girls of this age have different interest patterns, but some interests are lessening. Girls' interest in sports books increased, probably due to the women's liberation movement of the 70's.

One of the most disturbing findings of this study was the fact that middle-graders chose much less content interest through print now than ten years ago. They relied more on media information for content interests. To counteract this trend, teachers, librarians, and parents must keep informed about content interests and resources "to help make the reader-print connections that will lead to lifetime reading habits" (15).

Eeds, Maryann. "Bookwords: Using a Beginning Word List of High Frequency Words from Children's Literature K-3." The Reading Teacher 38 (Jan. 1985): 418-423.

Eeds contends that it is an accepted fact that using children's literature is important in insuring that children become readers in addition to learning how to read. However, teachers seem reluctant to put aside the security of the supposedly scientific-based basal reading series. Through the use of a computer, the author developed a 227-word primary level list of words found frequently in children's literature. She recommended that these words not be taught in isolation but rather in context. Listed, also, were fifty books that could be used along with the Bookwords to implement teaching reading with children's books.

Moss, Joy F. Focus Units in Literature: A Handbook for Elementary School Teachers. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1984.

"A literary environment which fosters strong positive attitudes about reading is a critical factor in developing the motivation necessary to learn how to read and to become a reader" (3).

This book presents an instructional model called the Focus Unit which is sequence structured around literature and used to expand comprehension skills and lterary interests. Each chapter provides a specific Focus Unit model designed for actual classroom use, as well as suggested grade levels. It includes a lesson plan, a description of its implementation, and a bibliography of books to use for that particular unit both as group read-aloud stories and independent reading. Guidelines for questioning, suggestions for creative expression, whole class follow-up activities as well as independent activities are included.

Using the Focus Unit concept makes it easy for any teacher to lead children into an active exploration of language and literature in an enjoyable way. These kinds of pleasurable experiences will enhance the quality of children's response to literature and foster positive feelings about reading.

McClure, Amy A. "Integrating Children's Fiction and Informational Literature in a Primary Reading Curriculum." The Reading Teacher 35 (Apr. 1982): 784-789.

The natural curiosity of children draws them to books for information. Teachers can take advantage of this curiosity by integrating nonfiction with related fiction and poetry to develop a holistic reading program. One way to do this is by developing units based on a central idea or theme of interest to children.

Using this thematic approach requires a great deal of organization and committment on the part of the teacher; however, students will be highly motivated to read because they will be seeking answers to their own questions.

STUDENT RESPONSE TO LITERATURE

Purves, Alan C. How Porcupines Make Love. Lexington, MA: Xerox College Publishing, 1972.

"Of course you don't teach literature, you teach students or children" (32). People should be the focus of instruction. In recent years too much attention has been paid to things, and people have been forgotten. Purves' response-centered program is not focused only on the child nor only on the literature. It deals with what happens when child meets subject; consequently, it could be called child-and-subject centered.

The response-centered curriculum recognizes people's diversity and encourages it. It recognizes the connections between people and encourages the sharing of responses. The procedure is simple. The teacher encourages each person to express his response and further encourages everyone involved to "respond to the response". As people work together they modify or retain their responses as it seems appropriate. The aim of the Purves program is threefold: to affect people's perception of literature, to affect their ability to respond, and to affect their tolerance of other's responses.

Hickman, Janet. "Everything Considered: Response to Literature in an Elementary School Setting." Journal of Research and Development in Education 16 (Spring 1983): 8-13.

Children respond to children's literature more readily than they do to a basal story. Responses can be spontaneous or solicited. Spontaneous response can be body movement or expression, casual references, art work, or writing. Solicited response is almost always verbal in nature and is still the most common response form in elementary schools.

Teachers have great power over children's response to literature simply by what titles are chosen and how they are presented as well as their own responses to literature.

Sutherland, Zena, Dianne L. Monson, and May Hill Arbuthnot. Children and Books. Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1981.

To prevent interest in reading from fading as children mature, adults who are readers and show excitement about books must be in contact with these children. Children must have recurring and rewarding experiences with literature. These experiences should include good oral reading by adults, an opportunity for children to talk about what they read and hear, an opportunity to participate in activities that enhance understanding of literature and response to it.

A response to literature can be subtle or obvious, immediate or delayed. Many responses of young children involve an emotional interaction with a story or character. Besides this most common emotional interaction, interpretive, critical, and evaluative responses are also encouraged.

Children need to be guided in a variety of response modes. The most basic are simple discussions of the stories read. Dramatic activities provide a variety of ways to respond to literature. Role-playing, dramatization, readers theater, and puppetry are all good response forms.

The written response may be the most exacting form of response, but it need not follow the traditional "book report" format. Keeping a diary or journal, doing a point-of-view review, or writing a script for stage or television can all evoke excellent response in children.

Early response needs to be encouraged because it leads to deeper response,and response produces avid readers.

Rosenblatt, Louise M. "The Literacy Transaction: Evocation and Response." Theory into Practice 21 (Autumn 1982): 268-277.

Reading is a two-way transaction involving a reader and a text at a particular time under particular circumstances. We respond to what we are getting from the text we are reading. Our response is a reaction to the printed word. To really reach a child, the text must make him hear or feel or see something.

The blandness of most basal reader stories will not evoke a reader response. Reading becomes a recitation of words. It is very important, then, that at a young age children are able to share the pleasures and benefits of literature. Good children's literature will evoke a positive response from the reader. This will nurture the desire to read and foster a love of reading which will carry on into adulthood.

Manning, Gary L., and Maryann Manning. "What Models of Recreational Reading Make a Difference?" Reading World 23 (May 1984): 375-380.

The lack of recreational reading is a major concern of educators today. The purpose of this study was to determine what models of recreational reading, if any, improved students' reading. A control group and three different recreational reading models (sustained silent reading, peer interaction, and teacher/student conferences) were used. The four groups were formed by random assignment of 477 fourth grade students and 24 teachers.

These four groups were considered equivalent at the outset of the study since a pretest in reading achievement and attitudes showed no statistically significant difference between them. At the end of the study, however, statistically significant differences were found. Students involved in the peer interaction model and the individual teacher/student conferences models obtained significantly higher gains on a measure of attitude and achievement than did the control group or the sustained silent reading model. In addition, these data indicate that the students involved in the peer interaction model obtained significantly higher scores than the students in the other three groups. This study suggest that peer interaction be considered for classroom implementation to promote recreational reading.

Hickman, Janet. "Research Currents: Researching Children's Response to Literature." Language Arts 61 (Mar. 1984): 278-284.

The traditional tools of the researcher in the field of language arts has always been observing teachers and students in their daily routines, interviewing these subjects, and collecting artifacts such as drawings and compositions about books. Hickman, in this study, has followed the above pattern.

This study demonstrated the interrelatedness of talking, listening, reading, and writing as children read and respond to books. The data collected shows how important the human context is in responding to literature. Children often teach each other reader behaviors and strategies for responding. Spontaneous sharing of literature was frequently observed in three classrooms involved in this study. This kind of sharing frequently influenced the choice of books students made. Children working together in an environment rich in literature became a "community of readers". These children talked about books and through this talking had a chance to explore and build meaning.

The teacher in the classroom is the most influential force in a child's literary development. Whatever teachers do or fail to do with books has its effect on children's progress as readers and their love of reading.

Cullinan, Bernice E., and Carolyn W. Carmichael, eds. Literature and Young People. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1977.

Research evidence shows us that experiences provided through literature contribute to children's knowledge, enrich their use of language, and increase their ability to read. Through observation, children who experience literature share a joy not found in those who do not have literary experiences. Literary experiences is an all-encompassing term which includes not only books but storytelling, films, recordings, slides, and other media that can play a part in the enrichment of children's lives.

Traditional literature for children has clear-cut structure, characters, and language. Literature can be presented in many ways: storytelling, reading aloud, creative dramatics, pantomime, and puppetry.

Presenting literature to children is important but not enough in itself. Children must be allowed to respond to literature both verbally and nonverbally. Responses can be spontaneous or solicited. The information we gain from children's responses can guide us in improving the quality of literary experiences.

Kiefer, Barbara. "The Responses of Children in a Combination First/Second Grade Classroom to Picture Books in a Variety of Artistic Styles." Journal of Research and Development in Education 16 (Spring 1983): 14-20.

This study was undertaken to provide a framework for primary children's responses to picture books. It was found that children looked at books in different ways and chose a variety of ways in which to respond. They reread, talked about, wrote about, or drew pictures about the book. Aspects of the picture books seemed to appear unconsciously in their language. Individual responses often changed with individual books. The setting in which responses occurred seemed to be the key factor in determining the richness and depth of those responses. Children seemed to need time, a variety of materials, and, most importantly, a teacher or other adult who was able to develop their early responses instead of stifling them.

Response to literature can give us insights into a variety of oral language and reading behaviors.

"Children's Choices for 1985." The Reading Teacher 39 (Oct. 1985): 34-49.

This project of the International Reading Association and the Children's Book Council Joint Committee is a listing of a yearly selection by young readers of newly published books that children themselves like. Listing of trade books to which children enthusiastically respond can be of help in any classroom reading program.

Of the 2,600 children's books published in 1984, nearly one-fourth were selected for testing. A voting system recorded the choices of children. Titles are grouped by reading levels.

SUMMARY

The first warning that today's children are not developing the habit or desire to read was sounded by Charlotte Huck (1983). She, as well as Sutherland, Monson,and Arbuthnot, urged the use of children's literature as the best means of leading children to the joys of reading and thus influencing them to become life-long readers. Sutherland defined children's literature as books of high literary and artistic merit written specifically for children. These books meet the background and interests of children as well as open new vistas into knowledge and pleasure. Reasoner considered enjoyment the prime purpose of literature and cautioned teachers that an effective program had to be innovative and could not be presented in orderly, pre-ordained packages. Arbuthnot advocated the need for establishing standards for judging books and considered children's enjoyment the ultimate criteria.

Indictments of American schools were made by both Goodman (1986) and Adler -- Goodman cautioning that the gap between the best knowledge in the field of reading instruction and actual practice was widening, and Adler accusing our schools of an inferior quality of reading based on skills rather than content. Adler considered this one kind of illiteracy -- knowing <u>how</u> to read but not knowing the <u>joys</u> of reading. The Commission on Reading, chaired by Richard Anderson, was also critical of the present day approach to reading instruc-

tion and proposed a seventeen-point plan for improvement -- one of which was the use of children's literature.

In the McEvoy-Vincent study, data indicated that adults read for pleasure and information. Ribovich and Erickson, in their study of older adults, confirmed that premise but extended it to include the fact that reading attitudes were generally developed in childhood and carried over into later years. They concluded, therefore, that enjoyment and information should be included as objectives in a successful reading program in the elementary school.

Overtly or covertly, many authorities criticize the heavy emphasis on traditional reading practices in elementary classrooms -- particularly the inadequacies of basal readers. Goodman (1966) stated simply that basals, with their limited content and over-simplified sentences, could not begin to capture a child's imagination; while Meisel and Glass found that basals do not reflect the interests of students. Direct correlation between the interests of the reader and the comprehension of the material was reiterated in the Cook-White survey.

Because of the very nature of content textbooks, statistical facts are many but human interactions are few. Brozo and Tomlinson proposed integrating trade books with texts to fill the gap between fact and feeling.

The consensus of opinion among authorities was that beginning readers should be predictable in language or plot. Bridge, Winograd, and Haley found in their study that many

basals are not predictable in language or plot.

The limitations of basal readers as stated above are evident. How, then, are they to be overcome? In a survey of teachers who are proponents of children's literature, Simons found that all considered reading literature "fun". They felt this approach also stimulated thinking and encouraged introspection. Huck (1977) reiterated these feelings when she stated that the real value of using literature in the reading program was that children experience the fun of reading. Morrow (1985) indicated researchers are concluding that developmental reading programs are too heavily skill-oriented and preclude reading for pleasure; however, attitudes toward reading can be changed, as reported by Estill and Filler. Attitudes toward reading are strongly affected by the manner of reading instruction, as documented by Rafinski. Eldridge and Butterfield (1986) concurred with this finding at the conclusion of their study of five experimental approaches to reading instruction. Positive attitudes were measured with groups using children's literature while attitudes decreased among children using basal readers, indicating that materials do have an impact on the achievement and attitudes of the reader.

Hittleman, Smith, and Hopkins advanced some of the extraneous benefits of children's literature -- Hittleman pointing out the fact that literature offered insights into and appreciation of diverse cultural and ethnic groups, Smith stressing the influence of literature on the socialization of

children, while Hopkins suggested the use of literature to promote understanding and positive attitudes toward the physically and mentally disabled.

The genre of children's literature are many and varied. O'Brien's study bypothesized that basal readers did not provide adequate amounts and varieties of quality literature. Green and Olson found that children indicated a strong preference for the original children's book over adaptations of these books, which is a common practice in basals. Exposure to a wide variety of story structures, as reported by Morrow (1982), enabled children to develop a schemata for other stories, helping to develop comprehension.

Children's literature helps to build up a reservoir of literary language which makes prediction possible, as documented by Gambrell and McLaughlin. Goodman (1982) concurred with this finding and also pointed out the parallels between relevancy of literature with prediction and comprehension. Widomski, too, supported the development of comprehension as a meaning based process through the use of children's literature. In their research, Lehman and Crook found the emphasis on mechanics of reading in most basal programs detrimental to comprehension and urged the use of children's literature to aid in comprehension.

In their linguistic analysis of the functional potential of language, Pappas and Brown concluded that children's literature provided a better access to written language, consequently providing a better source for the functional poten-

tial of language. Noyce and Christie's study reported on the effective use of children's literature as a model for syntactic pattern development, while Chomsky's significant study found a strong correlation between language development and exposure to children's literature.

Authorities were unanimous in stating the importance of the teacher in reader development. Effective reading practices were presented by a number of authors. Huck (1976) developed a rationale for teachers to follow in her classic book which tells "why", "how", and "what". Veatch, too, presented guidelines for a program which teaches reading through literature; however, she advocates the use of self-selected materials. Moss and Cullinan (1987) also authored books which could be used as instructional models, aiding the teacher in developing a complete program centered around children's literature.

Some of the inadequacies of children's literature were also discussed. In his study, Patrick examined the social perspectives presented in children's literature and warned of the heavy emphasis on "self" which teachers would need to counterbalance. The decline in the use of content interest books was the basis of the Feeley study. She cautioned teachers about the necessity of being better informed about content interests and resources.

The importance of a clear understanding of the purposes of reading instruction and practices were examined by both

Logan and Welsh in their respective studies, as did the Eldredge and Butterfield (1984) study.

The response factor in a literature program is essential and advocated by many authorities in the field of reading and language arts. Purves developed a response-centered program which focuses on child and literature simultaneously. Hickman (1983) and Sutherland (1981) both reported on the various types of response while Rosenblatt and Cullinan (1977) reported on effective methods of encouraging response. Manning and Manning determined from their study that peer interaction was more effective than SSR in encouraging a reader response.

Response to illustrations was the focus of the Kiefer study. She also determined that the setting in which a response occurred affected the richness and depth of the response.

CONCLUSIONS

THE NECESSITY OF LITERATURE IN THE CLASSROOM

The need for children's literature in the elementary curriculum has been well documented in research. Many factors appear to contribute to a child's interest in books. One of the most prominent is simply exposure to literature in a variety of formats. This encourages pleasurable experiences with books and lays the foundation for a lifetime of reading enjoyment, which in turn will lead to greater literacy.

THE JUSTIFICATION OF A LITERATURE PROGRAM

Reading instruction presented in the confines of a traditional format, primarily basal readers, is narrow in approach and does not lead to healthy attitudes toward reading. Because of the limited content of basal readers, the needs and interests of the individual cannot be addressed. In addition, the emphasis on skill acquistions precludes actual time for reading.

The use of children's literature will add a new dimension to any reading program. It promotes both facility with language and intellectual curiosity because children's literature is alive with unforgettable characters, language that stirs the imagination, and plots that are real or fanciful. Children's literature is genuine reading material designed to satisfy the inner-need for adventure and fun. Otherwise, children turn to television for satisfaction.

THE EXPECTATIONS OF A LITERATURE PROGRAM

It is the teacher's domain to influence favorable attitudes toward a subject; consequently, the role of the teacher is paramount in encouraging the development of a child into a reader. The teacher must have an understanding of the needs and interests of each child and be able to meet them. The teacher committed to using literature in the best possible way must be knowledgeable and organized. Providing pleasant consequences when we teach reading is bound to have positive impact on the reader.

Incorporating literature into the curriculum is not enough in itself. Reader involvement or response must also be encouraged to realize the full potential of a literature program. It is necessary, then, to be familiar with all the known response modes, methods of encouraging response, and how to evaluate it.

All children have the right to become competent readers -- to know how to read and be able to experience the joy of reading. Learning is for the future -- something to be carried on after instruction is completed. It is the obligation of the educational community to present reading in such a manner that it will be carried on. Perhaps the time has come to concentrate on what children read rather than how they read.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Children's literature be incorporated as a regular part of the elementary curriculum.
2. Children be exposed to a wide variety of literary works to meet and expand their individual areas of interest and also be encouraged to respond to these literary works in a variety of formats.
3. Teachers read to children daily, and also be enthusiastic models of reading.

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Butler University
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For a period of ten years, I have been an elementary teacher. In my "temporary retirement years", when I stayed at home to rear my children, I was still actively involved in teaching by tutoring at my children's school, teaching at my church, and working with Scouts. When I was approached five years ago to rejoin the teaching force, I eagerly accepted because it had always been a very rewarding experience for me. For the past four years I have taught second grade in a parochial school.

Reading and language arts have always been my primary interests. When I returned to active teaching, after a twelve year hiatus, I was truly shocked by the lack of enthusiasm for reading displayed by my students. That concern is what initially led me to I.U.S.B. I have taken some reading and literature classes here. In my opinion, if we are to compete with the electronic media, we must present a reading program that is alive and eclectic.